

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
8 November 2007

Original: English

Letter dated 8 November 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Please allow me to make a few comments on your progress report on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2007/645) of 1 November 2007. My comments will specifically focus on your observations as reflected in section XIV of the report. My delegation attaches great importance to your reports and several efforts have been made in the past to ensure that there is more focus on the core issue of the Eritrea-Ethiopia peace process, which is demarcation. Regrettably, the current report is biased and fails to take full account of the progress made and the setbacks encountered during the reporting period.

In your previous report, of 18 July 2007 (S/2007/440), you expressed your deep concern at “the continued stalemate in the boundary demarcation process”, and strongly urged “both countries to take advantage of the Commission’s advice and assistance before it takes action to conclude its work at the end of November”. And you drew “the parties’ attention to the Commission’s decision to convene a meeting with them on 6 September”. Yet again, in the Observations’ section of your report, no mention is made of this important event. This despite Security Council resolution 1767 (2007), in which the Council underlined “the importance of this meeting”.

Demarcation being the core issue, the report does not give an accurate account of what transpired at the Hague meeting. In the same resolution, the Security Council stressed “the need for progress on demarcation”, and it reiterated its call “upon both parties to cooperate fully with the EEBC, including participating constructively and with sufficient authority in the meeting to be convened by the EEBC on 6 September”. Eritrea responded positively to the call of the Security Council by reaffirming its commitment and by demonstrating flexibility with regard to the concerns expressed by the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission. The report, however, failed to welcome the flexibility Eritrea showed at that meeting. The willingness of Eritrea to cooperate with the Boundary Commission on all accounts should have been acknowledged, if not welcomed.

Furthermore, the report disregards the failure by Ethiopia to cooperate with the Boundary Commission and makes no demand on Ethiopia to address several of the concerns raised by the Boundary Commission during the Hague meeting, including the “unqualified acceptance of the 2002 Delimitation Decision without requiring broader ranging negotiations between the Parties”. The most serious omission in the report is the recent threat by Ethiopia to withdraw from the Algiers Agreement. It is



not clear why the report chose to hide this fact. All the issues mentioned above ought to have been reflected in the report, not only for the record but also to bring the matter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

Demands are also made in your report that are not part of the Algiers Agreement. Your report suggests compromise in the demarcation of the border by employing language such as "to find common ground" and "to find a mutually acceptable way". That is language that Ethiopia has been pushing for during the last few years in order to get away from its treaty obligations. I urge you to pay close attention to the letter of President Isaias Afwerki, which discusses at length the views of Eritrea on this matter and is attached to the report of the Boundary Commission.

I should be grateful if the present letter would be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Araya Desta
Ambassador
Permanent Representative